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# Committee's CVE recommendations cite alum's thesis

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# Committee's CVE recommendations cite alum's thesis

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A recently released DHS [advisory committee report](#) on Countering Violent Extremism cites and includes recommendations from a Naval Postgraduate School Center for Homeland Defense and Security master's degree thesis.

Lynnwood (Washington) Police Chief Tom Davis' thesis, "[Now Is the Time for CVE-2: Updating and Implementing a Revised U.S. National Strategy to Counter Violent Extremism](#)," explored concepts and strategies surrounding extremism and self-radicalization in the U.S. Coincidentally, Davis recently accepted a chief's position after 29 years with the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office, where he worked while a student at CHDS.

"When I started my research, countering violent extremism was really an international issue," Davis recalled. "It didn't appear to be something we were too concerned about domestically and that fact concerned me. ISIS was not in the mainstream media and by the time I finished my research, ISIS was on the front page of every intelligence briefing."



Davis examined the December 2011 [Strategic Implementation Strategy Plan \(SIP\) for Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States](#) and August 2011 Empowering Local Partners to Prevent Violent Extremism in the United States, comparing them to strategies in the UK and Australia.

His thesis research found the policies were outdated and failed to account for the rise of social media-based self radicalization. And, the U.S. programmatic strategies failed to assign a single agency to manage all the activities within CVE efforts and failed to provide adequate resources and guidance to local communities.

In November 2015, DHS secretary Jeh Johnson directed the Homeland Security Advisory Council to form a subcommittee to study countering violent extremism policy. The resulting report, released in June 2016, contains recommendations culled directly from Davis' research:

1. Identifying the federal agency in charge of administering the U.S. CVE strategy.
2. Developing a more robust and actionable national CVE framework.
3. Refocusing the federal government on support and not local engagement of CVE.
4. Requiring all CVE related terms be defined in every document.
5. Requiring regular evaluations and updates of the U.S. CVE strategy.

Davis' thesis was one of six cited in the DHS Advisory Committee report that also consulted with experts from around the country. The DHS report recommends increasing funding for countering violent extremists programs by as much as \$100 million, tweaking communications infrastructure to account for new technologies, invest in deeper data analysis and development partnerships among the departments of State, Education and Health and Human Resources along with strengthening partnerships with State, Local, Tribal and Territorial law enforcement

"I'm hopeful those elements from my thesis will lead to a more robust strategy to help counter violent extremism here in the U.S.," Davis said.

As he progressed through CHDS master's degree coursework Davis developed an interest in how the U.S. counters violent extremism. The Comparative Government for Homeland Security course was helpful and led to an

examination of other countries' CVE practices in his thesis. He credited CHDS instructors [Dr. Nadav Morag](#) and Dr. [Kathleen Kiernan](#) for their guidance as he defined his thesis topic.

"As a 30-year law enforcement professional, I was interested in contributing to a body of academic work on a larger scale," Davis said. "I became interested in Nadav's research and the Comparative Government class. That really sparked my interest."

On the heels of the DHS Advisory Committee report Davis was hired to a new position that will enable him to continue applying his CHDS education. As chief of the Lynwood Police Department he oversees 70 sworn officers and 102 total employees. The city of about 37,000 lies north of Seattle on Interstate 5.

One of Davis' top priorities will be to usher the department through a study that is underway examining the city's police department, jail, municipal court and related services.

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*More from CHDS on [countering violent extremism](#).*

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